

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

TREASURY

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

INFO USSAGE NKP

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

COGARD

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST BY POUCH

XMT AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

UNCLAS STATE 269829

COGARD FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, XC, US

SUBJECT: DECEMBER 9 EA PRESS SUMMARY

1. INDOCHINA

GVN SAYS HEAVIEST FIGHTING IN YEAR CONTINUES IN DELTA
(WP; AP, PHINQ; CHITRIB). BOTH SIDES ACCUSE EACH
OTHER OF TRYING TO GRAB RICE CROP NOW BEING HARVESTED
(CSM). FIGHTING UPSURGE FOLLOWS COMMUNIST NOV 25
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DIRECTIVE TO CHECK "RICE LOOTING" BY GVN DURING HARVEST.
BOTH SIDES FIGHT TO CONTROL PEOPLE AND RICE FIELDS.
DURATION AND SCALE OF ATTACKS WILL INDICATE WHETHER
COMMUNISTS ARE DOING MORE THAN ROUTINELY PURSUING

ANNUAL "RICE WAR" (NYT).

SAIGON OFFICIALS REPORT THAT FIERCE FIGHTING ALSO FLARES NEAR KHMER BORDER (CHITRIB; AP, PHINQ; CSM). COMMUNISTS BOMBARD TAY NINH CITY, STAGE GROUND ATTACKS EIGHT MILES TO NE THAT ARE HALTED BY GVN RF UNITS WITH HELP OF ARTILLERY AND AIR STRIKES (NYT).

ABOUT 20 BUDDHIST NUNS BEGIN HUNGER STRIKE TO DRAMATIZE OPPOSITION TO THIEU; SAY FAST WILL LAST UNTIL GVN ALLOWS FREE ACCESS TO AND EGRESS FROM THEIR PAGODAS IN SAIGON. APPROXIMATELY 100 REPS FROM DOZEN DISSIDENT GROUPS MET IN CAPITAL DEC 8 TO OBSERVE ANNIVERSARY

OF UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS; SPOKESMAN ACCUSED BOTH SAIGON AND HANOI OF USING "BRUTALITY AS A MEANS TO GOVERN AND LIES AS A POLICY TO CONSOLIDATE THEIR POWER" (AP, PHINQ).

NYT'S MARKHAM IN TAY NINH SEES CITY AS CALM DESPITE EXPECTATIONS BY GVN STAFF OFFICERS AND INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS THAT NVA WILL SOON ATTACK OR ENCIRCLE IT. QUOTES SENIOR OFFICER IN SVN DIVISION RESPONSIBLE FOR CITY'S DEFENSE THAT NVA CAN MOVE IN SWIFTLY BUT CANNOT HOLD. NOTES THAT DESPITE RUMORS MOST PEOPLE STAY, WORKING AT REGULAR JOBS AND "BY MANY ACCOUNTS" CARRYING ON PROFITABLE, ILLEGAL TRADE WITH VC IN CLOTH, SALT AND MEDICINE. DESCRIBES CAO DAI HOLY SEE IN TAY NINH, GIVES SOME DETAILS OF ECLECTIC AND "SOMETIMES DIFFICULT TO FATHOM" FAITH. CHARACTERIZES CAO DAI FAITHFUL AS "STUBBORN IN THEIR CONVICTIONS AS MANY VIETCONG," QUOTES ARVN CPL THAT VC COULDN'T TAKE DISTRICT TOWN IN PREVIOUS HEAVY ACTION IN AREA, "SO HOW COULD THEY TAKE TAY NINH?"

CLAIBORNE (NYT) IN SAIGON VIEWS CITY LIFE FROM CONTINENTAL PALACE HOTEL TERRACE, SEES IT GOING UNCLASSIFIED

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ON WITH "ADMIRABLE GOOD CHEER" DESPITE SIGNS OF WAR THAT ONE SOON LEARNS TO IGNORE. SAYS GREAT SURPRISE TO NEWCOMER IS DEEP-ROOTED RESPECT FOR GOOD FOOD. DESCRIBES MEMORABLE MEALS AT GOOD RESTAURANTS, POINTS OUT FRENCH INFLUENCE AND "SUPERFICIAL" RELATION OF VIET CUISINE TO CHINESE.

2. JAPAN

SUN'S SEIDEN IN TOKYO SAYS DIET ON DEC 9 WILL FORMALLY CHOOSE MIKI AS PM. PREDICTIONS SAY NEW CABINET WILL BE DOMINATED BY SAME LDP LEADERS WHO WERE ACTIVE IN TANAKA GOVT.

WP'S OBERDORFER IN TOKYO SEES MIKI COMING TO POWER UNDER DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES, WITH UNPREDICTABLE FUTURE. NOT STRONGEST LDP LEADER, MIKI WAS CHOSEN BY ELDERS TO AVERT HEAD-ON CLASH BETWEEN TWO MORE POWERFUL MEN. DESPITE WEAK POLITICAL BASE, MIKI MUST DEAL WITH SERIOUS INTERNAL PROBLEMS, INCLUDING 25 PCT RATE OF INFLATION, ZERO GNP GROWTH, RISING UNEMPLOYMENT, DECADE-LONG SLUMP IN LDP FORTUNES, AND GROWING PRESS AND OPPOSITION ATTACKS ON FINANCIAL TIES BETWEEN BIG BUSINESS AND LDP.

LIKE PRES FORD, MIKI ALSO HAS TO DECIDE HOW TO HANDLE

CONTINUING INVESTIGATIONS OF PREDECESSOR'S SHADY DEALS, AND IS HIMSELF NOT IMMUNE FROM SCRUTINY -- AS FACTION LEADER WHO HAS COLLECTED AND DISPENSED FUNDS. REPORTED AWARD OF POWERFUL LDP SEC GEN POST TO AMBITIOUS RIVAL NAKASONE IS SIGN OF MIKI WEAKNESS, BUT OBERDORFER COMMENTS MIKI MAY HAVE IMPORTANT SOURCE OF POWER IN DIRECT APPEAL TO PEOPLE OVER HEADS OF PARTY POLITICIANS.

REGULAR SESSION OF DIET EARLY NEXT YEAR AND LOCAL ELECTIONS IN APRIL WILL BE FIRST TEST OF MIKI'S CLOUT WITH VOTERS, AS WELL AS PUBLIC JUDGMENT OF CONSERVATIVE LEADERSHIP WHICH HAS RULED JAPAN CONTINUOUSLY SINCE END OF WAR.
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REUTER PEKING (12/7) REPORTS CHOU EN-LAI HAS ASKED JAPANESE TRADE DELEGATION TO CONVEY BEST WISHES TO MIKI, IN FIRST PUBLIC CHINESE REACTION TO SUCCESSION IN JAPAN (WP).

AFP TOKYO REPORTS GAIMUSHO PLANS TO INCREASE DIPLOMATIC STAFF FROM 3,000 TO 5,000 OVER NEXT TEN YEARS, TO MEET JAPAN'S INCREASING INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES (WP).

JOC SAYS FUJI BANK RECENTLY OPENED BRANCH IN NYC, NOW JOINS RUSH TO SINGAPORE, WHERE NEW BRANCH WILL CONCENTRATE ON WHOLESALE BANKING, EURO AND ASIAN CURRENCY MARKET OPERATIONS, AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE TRANSACTIONS. JOC NOTES INDUSTRIAL BANK OF JAPAN ALSO OPENED BRANCH IN NYC THIS YEAR.

WSJ TOKYO REPORTS JAPAN AGREES TO CUT ANNUAL FISH CATCH IN NE PACIFIC AND BERING SEA BY 25 PCT, AND CRAB CATCH BY 23 PCT; ALSO AGREES TO KEEP ITS FISHERMEN OUT OF CERTAIN ALASKAN AND WEST COAST WATERS SEVERAL MONTHS OF YEAR. US NEGOTIATORS SAY THEY ARE

PLEASED AT CUTS AGREED TO BY JAPAN.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE PLANS TO REDUCE DEMAND FOR SUGAR BY PERSUADING CONSUMERS VOLUNTARILY TO RESTRAIN PRESENT CONSUMPTION OF SOME THREE MILLION TONS PER YEAR (WSJ).

3. BURMA

U THANT BURIED IN TOMB BUILT OVERNIGHT BY STUDENTS WHO SEIZED BODY LAST WEEK TO GIVE IT HONORS THEY THOUGHT GOVT NOT PROVIDING. THANT'S FAMILY REPORTEDLY

WANTS TO TRANSFER REMAINS TO SITE NEAR GRAVES OF OTHER BURMESE HEROES (WP; REUTER NYT, CHITRIB, SUN). THANT LAID TO REST IN PARTIALLY-COMPLETED MEMORIAL ON RANGOON U CAMPUS IN ATMOSPHERE OF TENSION AND CONTROVERSY. THOUSANDS VISIT SITE TO PAY LAST UNCLASSIFIED

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RESPECTS. OFFICIAL NEWS AGENCY SAYS THANT KIN EXPRESS DEEP REGRET THAT FUNERAL "ABUSED FOR POLITICAL ENDS BY SOME ELEMENTS" (PHINQ).

4. MALAYSIA

POLICE RAID TWO UNIVERSITIES, GRAB TEN STUDENT LEADERS IN ATTEMPT TO STOP ANTIGOV'T DEMONSTRATIONS (AP PHINQ, NYDN; WP; CHITRIB).

5. HK

TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL ANNOUNCES INTEGRATED INTL CREDIT FACTORING SERVICE INTRODUCED TO PROVIDE MAXIMUM SECURITY AND GUARANTEED REGULAR CASH FLOW TO EXPORTERS (JOC).

6. CHINA

AM STD SUBSIDIARY AGREES TO SELL ALMOST SEVEN MILLION DOLS WORTH OF TRUCKS AND REPLACEMENT PARTS TO CHINESE GOVT AGENCY (WSJ). CHARTERED AIRLINER CARRYING TWO WHITE RHINOS FROM LONDON ZOO TO PEKING ZOO LANDS IN HK EN ROUTE; RHINOS TRANSFERRED TO TRUCK FOR REST OF TRIP. GIFT IS TO RECIPROCATATE DONATION OF TWO GIANT PANDAS (AP, SUN).

UPI PEKING SAYS CHRISTIANITY HANGS ON THERE, KEPT ALIVE BY FOUR OLDSTERS. QUOTES MRS. RUSH THAT "THAT IS ABOUT ALL THERE IS, REALLY." FOUR GATHER TO HOLD SERVICE ON SUNDAY, CLING TO FAITH DESPITE "INTENSE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION." ARTICLE DESCRIBES ANTI-

CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY, SAYS HAK WHILE IN SOOCHOW STOPPED TO ADMIRE GROUP OF YOUNG GIRLS WHO WERE SINGING AND DANCING, BUT GIRLS WERE SINGING "UNDEVIATING PARTY LINE ABOUT HATING AND FIGHTING REVISIONISTS, RELIGION AND OTHER ENEMIES OF THE PEOPLE" (CHITRIB).

7. KOREA

ABOUT 60 OPPOSITION LEGISLATORS CLASHED WITH 300 POLICE
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SUNDAY AFTER LAWMAKERS LEFT NATL ASSEMBLY BUILDING FOLLOWING THREE-DAY SIT-IN TO DEMAND MORE DEMOCRATIC GOVT. NO ONE REPORTED SERIOUSLY HURT (WP). LAWMAKERS TRIED TO MARCH TO NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY HQ, BUT POLICE INSTEAD ESCORTED THEM HOME (AP, PHINQ; CHITRIB).

NYT DESCRIBES FREE-FOR-ALL, QUOTES ONE LEGISLATOR THAT POLICE RESORTED TO TOUGH MEASURES TO GET BASIS FOR DISORDERLY CONDUCT CHARGES LATER. KIM YOUNG SAM SAID THAT WILL TO FIGHT "OPPRESSIVE DICTATORSHIP" NOW STRONGER, AND THAT OFT-DIVIDED NDP HAD SUCCEEDED IN SHOWING SOLIDARITY TO NATION. TIMES COMMENTS THAT KIM SURPRISED BOTH GOVT AND PUBLIC WITH RECENT VIGOROUS ANTI-ROKG CAMPAIGN, AND THAT HE TAKES ISSUE WITH PARK ON QUESTION OF THREAT OF IMMINENT AGGRESSION FROM NK. NDP SAYS IT WILL FOLLOW SIT-IN WITH SERIES OF "EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY STRUGGLES" - STREET DEMONSTRATIONS - IN MAIN PROVINCIAL CENTERS. PARTY'S DEPUTY LEADER PREDICTS MOVEMENT TO REVISE CONSTITUTION WILL SPREAD TO KOREANS RESIDENT IN US, JAPAN AND ELSEWHERE.

COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

8. JAPAN

NYT'S HALLORAN IN TOKYO REPORTS THAT OUTPOURING OF BAD ECON NEWS IN JAPAN SEEMS RELENTLESS. GNP IN FIRST THREE QUARTERS OF 1974 IS BELOW COMPARABLE PERIODS IN 1973, AND OUTLOOK FOR YEAR IS MINUS GROWTH RATE FOR FIRST TIME SINCE 1951. IMF JUST REPORTED THAT JAPAN'S CONSUMER INFLATION RATE FOR YEAR ENDED IN OCTOBER WAS, AT 25.8 PERCENT, BY FAR HIGHEST IN INDUSTRIAL WORLD; WHOLESAL PRICES WERE UP 28.6 PERCENT OVER YEAR AGO IN OCTOBER; CONSUMER SPENDING, WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR ABOUT HALF OF GNP, DROPPED MARKEDLY BECAUSE REAL INCOME IS LESS THAN YEAR AGO. UNEMPLOYMENT IS DOUBLING AND BANKRUPTCIES, MOSTLY AMONG MEDIUM-SIZED CONCERNS, HAVE RUN OVER 1100 A MONTH FOR THREE MONTHS IN A ROW, THROUGH NOVEMBER. INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION HAS BEEN STEADILY DOWN SINCE MARCH AND WENT INTO MINUS FIGURES IN

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JUNE. SHIPMENTS DOWN SINCE FEBRUARY AND IN MINUS NUMBERS SINCE MARCH. INVENTORIES BUILDING STEADILY SINCE MARCH; ORDERS FOR MACHINERY, A KEY INDICATOR, DROPPED 46 PERCENT FROM SEPTEMBER TO OCTOBER AND ARE 12 PERCENT UNDER YEAR AGO - AND THAT AT INFLATED PRICES. CORPORATE PROFITS OFF ALL ALONG LINE, EXCEPT IN BANKS.

ON OPTIMISTIC SIDE, MANY LDP POLITICIANS AND SOME BUREAUCRATS SEE THINGS BRIGHTLY. MANY BUSINESSMEN EXPRESS HOPE AS IF THEY COULD TALK ECONOMY OUT OF

RECESSION; SOME FOREIGN BANKERS IN JAPAN PREDICT 5 TO 6 PERCENT GROWTH IN NEXT FY. HALLORAN CITES ASIA EDITION OF NEWSWEEK THAT JAPAN ENGINEERED "SECOND ECONOMIC MIRACLE" IN ESCAPING RAVAGES OF INFLATION AND OIL CRISIS. MAGAZINE POINTS TO IMPROVEMENT IN JAPAN'S B/P - TRADE ACCOUNT HAS BEEN IN SURPLUS FOR FIVE MONTHS, COUNTING OCTOBER.

9. INDONESIA

LAT'S ELEGANT (DEC 6) IN SANUR WRITES FEATURE ARTICLE ON IMPACT OF TOURISTS ON BALINESE, NOTING BALINESE FASCINATION OVER TOURISTS' ANTICS.

10. MICRONESIA

LAT'S DAVID LAMB (DEC 6) WRITES OF JAPANESE 4TH FLEET STILL RESTING IN ITS WATERY GRAVE IN TRUK LAGOON, WELL-PRESERVED MEMORIAL TO WAR WHICH STRUCK THERE 30 YEARS AGO. SAYS MUCH REMAINS TODAY OF JAPANESE PRESENCE IN MICRONESIAN ISLANDS - PRESENCE THAT BEGAN IN 1920 WHEN MOST OF MICRONESIA WAS MANDATED TO JAPAN UNDER LEAGUE OF NATIONS. MANY POLYNESIAN FAMILIES HAVE JAPANESE NAMES, MOST ELDERS SPEAK JAPANESE AND MORE THAN FEW REMEMBER FONDLY PREWAR DAYS OF TOKYO RULE WHEN SETTLEMENTS HAD ALL AMENITIES OF JAPANESE LIFE.

11. GENERAL

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WP'S DAN MORGAN REPORTS CONFIDENTIAL DOS PROPOSAL TO SPEND MAJOR SHARE OF THIS FY'S FOOD AID MONEY IN COUNTRIES WHERE US HAS VITAL POLITICAL OR SECURITY INTERESTS IS BEING QUESTIONED AT TOP LEVELS OF GOVT BY ADVOCATES OF AID FOR COUNTRIES THREATENED BY

STARVATION AND HUNGER. POLICY MAKERS UNABLE TO RESOLVE SPLIT BETWEEN "POLITICAL" AND "HUMANITARIAN" FACTIONS; THEREFORE, PRES WILL BE ASKED TO MAKE FINAL DECISION, PROBABLY TUESDAY, ON WHICH COUNTRIES RECEIVE AID FOR NEXT SIX MONTHS. DECISION HAS BEEN PUT OFF WHILE AUTHORITIES AWAITED MORE DEFINITIVE DATA ON US CROPS AND STATE OF ECONOMY. OFFICIALS NOW CERTAIN THAT OVERALL VALUE OF PROGRAM WILL BE INCREASED IN EXCESS OF 891 MILLION DOLLARS PROPOSED BY NIXON IN APRIL. PRES FORD PLEDGED INCREASES AT UN IN OCTOBER. HOWEVER, AGENCIES ARE STILL FAR APART ON WHETHER INCREASE SHOULD BE TOKEN OR SUBSTANTIAL. THUS AS MANY AS FOUR OPTIONS MAY BE PRESENTED TO PRES.

VARIOUS DOCUMENTS - INCLUDING DOS OPTIONS PAPER - WERE MADE AVAILABLE TO WP BY OFFICIALS WHO SAID THEY WERE MAKING THEM PUBLIC IN LAST-DITCH EFFORT TO SHIFT FY 75 FOOD FOR PEACE PROGRAM'S EMPHASIS TO HUMANITARIAN NEEDS. DOS AND NSC REPS WERE REPORTED TO HAVE ARGUED FOR SIZEABLE FOOD AID PROGRAM FOR SUCH REGIONS AS CHILE, SK, ME AND INDOCHINA. ORIGINAL DOS MEMO LISTED THREE SPENDING OPTIONS: LOW, MEDIUM AND HIGH, WITH VALUES IN DOLLARS OF 764 MILLION, 1.1 BILLION, 1.3 BILLION, RESPECTIVELY. TOTAL TONNAGE OF WHEAT AND RICE ALLOCATED UNDER THREE PROPOSALS WAS 2.7, 4, AND 4.8 MILLIONS. ALL THREE ALTERNATIVES ASSIGNED SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT TO COUNTRIES WHERE US HAS VITAL POLITICAL OR SECURITY INTEREST. IN MIDDLE LEVEL PLAN, FOR EXAMPLE, CAMBODIA, VN, SK, INDONESIA, CHILE, PAKISTAN, EGYPT, JORDON, SYRIA, AND ISRAEL WERE LISTED FOR LOW-INTEREST, LONG-TERM CREDITS TO BUY FOOD TOTALING 612 MILLION DOLLARS, OUT OF 1.1 BILLION TOTAL. MIDDLE OPTION PROGRAM ALLOCATED 194 MILLION IN CREDITS TO HUNGER-STRICKEN NATIONS LIKE INDIA, BANGLADESH AND SRI LANKA AS WELL AS 328 MILLION IN GIVEAWAYS. HIGH OPTION ADDS MORE THAN 100 MILLION DOLLARS IN CREDITS UNCLASSIFIED

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TO ASIAN SUBCONTINENT COUNTRIES AND IT ALSO INCREASES SIZE OF CREDITS FOR FOOD BUYING TO CHILE AND SK.

DOS OFFICIAL CONCEDED THAT SECURITY AND POLITICAL CONSIDERATION DO HAVE HIGH PRIORITY IN DOS' POSITION, ASSERTING THAT HUMANITARIAN AID ALSO DOES. ANOTHER OFFICIAL CONCEDED THAT FOOD FOR PEACE PROGRAM IS SHOT THROUGH WITH CONFLICTING PRESSURES. ONE SOURCE SAID, FOR INSTANCE, THAT DOD REPS HAVE ARGUED THAT US HAS OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE CREDITS TO SK BECAUSE OF THAT COUNTRY'S AGREEMENT TO COMMIT COMBAT TROOPS TO SVN DEFENSE. ALSO, SUPPORT FOR LARGE US SHIPMENTS OF RICE TO INDOCHINA AND KOREA HAS BEEN URGED BY CONGRESSMEN

FROM RICE STATES. KISSINGER

NOTE BY OCT: POUCHED PUDAPEST.

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